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## REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS.

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*Physical Features of Missouri.* By CURTIS FLETCHER MARBUT.  
*Geological Survey of Missouri*, Vol. X, pp. 1-109, 1896.

This report represents one of the first attempts on the part of a state geological survey to interpret the physical geography of the state concerned from the modern standpoint. The report brings out many interesting facts and relations, even though the topographic map of the state is not complete, and all the data which the area may ultimately afford for the interpretation of its geography are therefore not now available.

The general physical features of the state are discussed from the standpoint of history. The processes of their evolution, and their dependence on geological structure are emphasized, thus bringing out what geographers have long recognized—that any rational interpretation of geography must be based upon a knowledge of geological structure.

The general physiographic provinces of the state are outlined, and their leading characteristics succinctly set forth, and set forth in such a way as to give them a meaning. It is not too much to say that any one who masters this part of Mr. Marbut's report will have a conception of many of the common processes by which topography is developed, and will have acquired some ability to interpret geography for himself.

In the discussion of the hydrography of the state, the same fundamental principles of treatment are followed. Various types of drainage, as drainage is now classified, are found to exist within the state, and specific illustrations are pointed out. It is one of the evidences of the right methods of river study now in vogue, that they are found to fit regions which had not been studied when they were adopted. Many special features of valleys as developed in Missouri are discussed, and new illustrations of various well-known principles are furnished. River meanders come in for special and discriminating discussion.

One of the chief objects to be attained by the systematic treatment of physical geography by the state surveys is educational. It is in every way desirable to disseminate accurate information among the people, and to have the information in such form that it will stimulate independent study. Another object is to furnish professional geographers with accurate knowledge of the region studied. Mr. Marbut's report must be looked upon as more successful from the standpoint of geographers, than from the standpoint of those who are not. Judged from the standpoint of the reader who is not posted in the principles and nomenclature of modern geography, the report is in danger of seeming unnecessarily technical and so of not being understood. This danger is enhanced by the fact that it occasionally lacks in clearness, both because the language is obscure, and because of the lack, at some points, of adequate illustration. Another defect in the same line appears in the frequent references to places which no accompanying map locates. From the standpoint of the geographer these defects may not be serious, but from the standpoint of the citizen who is not a geographer, it is to be feared that they will too often cause the report to remain unread. It goes without saying that it is much easier to point out these shortcomings than to remedy them.

A question is here raised, by way of suggestion, rather than of criticism, concerning one of the statements of the report. On page 76 it is said that the upper Mississippi probably assumed its present location in late Cretaceous time. There is some reason, though at present by no means conclusive, for suspecting that the present location of this stream was selected at a much later date, possibly as late as the Tertiary.<sup>1</sup> If it shall prove to be true that the isolated remnants of preglacial gravels, occurring at high levels at various points in the Mississippi basin are Tertiary, the development of the present physiographic features of the Mississippi basin, including the valley of the master stream, must date from a still later time. R. D. S.

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*Geologic Atlas of the United States. Folio 18, Smartsville, California, 1895.*

This folio consists of four pages of text, signed by Waldemar Lindgren and H. W. Turner, geologists, and G. F. Becker, geologist in charge; a topographic sheet (scale 1:125,000), a sheet of areal geology, one of economic geology, and one of structure sections.

*Topography.*—The district of country represented lies between the